

**THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. In a system using phenolics alone or in combination with one or more other polymers, the improvement comprising using an emulsion polymer, which includes crosslinkable functionality and which includes the addition of a protective colloid, to replace or substantially eliminate or  
5 substantially reduce the amount of phenolics.
2. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the protective colloid is a polyvinyl alcohol.
3. The system according to Claim 2, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol is fully hydrolyzed.
4. The system according to Claim 2, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol is partially hydrolyzed.
5. The system according to Claim 1, wherein the crosslinkable functionality is provided by a self-crosslinking monomer selected from the group consisting of N-methylol acrylamide, N-methylol methacrylamide and C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>4</sub> ethers thereof.
6. A filter comprising a filter substrate impregnated with an emulsion polymer, the emulsion polymer being substantially devoid of phenolics and stabilized using a protective colloid.
7. The filter according to Claim 6, wherein the protective colloid is a polyvinyl alcohol.
8. The filter according to Claim 7, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol is fully hydrolyzed.
9. The filter according to Claim 7, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol is partially hydrolyzed.

10. The filter according to Claim 6, wherein the emulsion polymer has crosslinkable functionality provided by a self-crosslinking monomer selected from the group consisting of N-methylol acrylamide, N-methylol methacrylamide and C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>4</sub> ethers thereof.
11. A filter comprising a filter substrate impregnated with an emulsion polymer, the emulsion polymer being substantially devoid of phenolics and stabilized using a polyvinyl alcohol.
12. The filter according to Claim 11, wherein the protective colloid is a polyvinyl alcohol.
13. The filter according to Claim 12, wherein polyvinyl alcohol is fully hydrolyzed.
14. The filter according to Claim 12, wherein the polyvinyl alcohol is partially hydrolyzed.
15. The filter according to Claim 11, wherein the emulsion polymer has crosslinkable functionality provided by a self-crosslinking monomer selected from the group consisting of N-methylol acrylamide, N-methylol methacrylamide and C<sub>1</sub> to C<sub>4</sub> ethers thereof.